

What is claimed is:

1. A method of improving plant growing conditions over a specified area of soil,
comprising the steps of:

aerating the soil of the specified area by punching uniform holes in a uniform
5 pattern in the area ;
applying a selected granular aggregate uniformly over the area to at least partially
fill the aerating holes;
applying soil amendments uniformly over the area; and
smoothing the area using a drag mat to even the distribution of the applied
10 selected granular aggregate and cause the surface of the area to have a smooth
appearance.

2. The method according to claim 1 and including the additional step of
moistening the area with water before aerating the soil.

4. The method according to claim 1 wherein the granular aggregate is sand.

15 5. The method according to claim 2 wherein the soil amendments include
compost.

6. The method according to claim 2 wherein the soil amendments include
fertilizer.

7. The method according to claim 2 wherein the soil amendments include
20 compost and fertilizer.

8. The method according to claim 1 wherein a mycorrhizal fungus is applied
before the application of the granular aggregate.

9. A vehicle for transporting and distributing granular material, said vehicle comprising:

a truck chassis having a hopper body thereon;

a conveyer running the length of the bottom inside surface of the hopper in
5 contact with the granular material said conveyer, extending beyond the rear end of the truck chassis for discharging said granular material, the discharge point being elevated approximately four feet from the ground;

means for controlling the speed of said conveyer; and

means for regulating the rate of discharge of said granular material from said
10 hopper to said conveyer.

10. The vehicle according to claim 9 wherein said conveyer is driven by a hydraulic motor and the means for controlling the speed of said conveyer is by varying
the speed of said hydraulic motor.

11. The vehicle according to claim 10 wherein the means for regulating the rate of
15 discharge of said granular material from said hopper to said conveyer includes a vertically slideable gate in an opening at the rear end of said hopper, said gate being slideable to regulate the size of said opening; and

a hydraulic cylinder for sliding said gate.

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12. A drag mat for evenly distributing and smoothing a granular material applied over a specified area of soil, said mat comprising:

a rigid frame forming a closed rectangular shape, said frame having a leading edge and a trailing edge;

5 a flexible lattice screen attached to said frame to form a bottom surface of said mat;

a hardened metallic bar attached to the lower edge of said leading edge of said mat; and

means for attaching the leading edge of said mat to a vehicle for dragging the mat

10 over a surface.

The drag mat according to claim 12 wherein said rigid frame is formed using angle iron having arms of approximately 1" x 1".

13. The drag mat according to claim 12 wherein said hardened metallic bar attached to the leading edge of said frame is approximately 3/8" square.

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